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Putting the Tiles Together: Building Diversity in the Archival Profession

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were able to engage with at least two or more of the five activity stations.

We spent much of our planning time thinking about how to adapt the activities. However, we overlooked the fact that making the space accessible also meant that we as facilitators had to be adaptable. This quickly became apparent during an activity in which participants constructed a wiggle robot made out of a plastic cup, a battery, tape, a wax stick, markers, and a couple of wires. We iterated and innovated on the fly as we described the robot to someone who had no vision. We guided attendees' hands as they created the robot. They could feel whether they were successful, because the robot would vibrate once completed. Even after completing a robot, attendees were enthusiastic about repeating the experience of building and receiving a tactile response. The experience taught us to adjust our expectations just as we imagined our attendees have to on a daily basis.

Observations

After the event, the group made the following observations about accessible makerspaces that could serve to inform those who work in libraries with makerspaces or those who are planning them.

- Makerspaces can be made accessible to more diverse populations with thoughtful consideration of the varying abilities of patrons.
- Makerspaces should challenge participant comfort zones—and can do the same for those who plan and facilitate them.
- When made accessible to all users, makerspaces augment the fundamental mission of libraries—to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and information to create a better society.

As librarians work with students and lifelong learners with diverse backgrounds, learning needs, and interests, it is critical that the needs of individuals with disabilities are also included in the planning of events and spaces that could positively impact their lives. Accessible makerspaces allow more diverse groups to interact with emerging technologies and with one another. We can only imagine the types of activities and knowledge transfer that will occur when more of these spaces are inclusive of those who can share the lessons they have learned in a world that is not always made accessible.

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ny from DCPL; and Michael Smith-Welch and Matt Barnhotlz from FutureMakers for their work on this project.

Endnotes

1. <http://terpconnect.umd.edu/~mmsubram/index.html>
2. <https://kidsmakethingsbetter.com>



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Putting the Tiles Together: Building Diversity in the Archival Profession ¹

In 2004, the Society of American Archivists's (SAA) A*Census revealed that only 7% of American archivists were of color.² In her analysis of these numbers, Brenda Banks writes, "To say that these numbers are no surprise is an understatement. The results from the A*CENSUS simply confirmed information already known—that there are very few minorities in the profession, with the largest identifiable group being African Americans at 2.8%."³ Indeed, the percentage of minority archivists in the United States was significantly lower than the percentage of minorities in the country as a whole. The United States Census Bureau estimated that in 2004, slightly over 20% of the population was either non-white, or was of two or more races.⁴

In September of 2012, SAA and ARL partnered to apply for an Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) grant to develop the Mosaic Program, to recruit racial and ethnic minorities to the archival profession. In light of this effort, this article provides a brief history of SAA's minority recruitment efforts.

In 1987, the Minorities Roundtable was established as the first SAA component group to support the interests of minority archivists. As a continuation of the Minorities Task Force, which advised the SAA Council on the status of minorities in the profession, the roundtable aimed to:

identify and address the concerns facing minorities within the archival profession and its professional organizations;...serve as a clearinghouse for minorities in promoting their wider participation at all levels of the profession and the SAA and to enhance the membership base of the SAA; [and] support and promote all efforts to genuinely improve the status of minorities within the profession...⁵

In 1988, the roundtable's name was changed to African-American and Third World Archivists Roundtable (AATWAR) and in 1994, the roundtable settled on its current name, Archivists and Archives of Color (AAC). According to its current mission statement, one of AAC's purposes is to "promote wider participation" of "archivists of African, Asian, Latino, Native American and Pacific Islander descent." Today, the Native American Archives Roundtable (established 2005) and the Latin American & Caribbean Cultural Heritage Archives Roundtable (established 2008) also exist to support archivists and archives of color.

In 1993, SAA established the Minority Student Award. Proposed and sponsored by AATWAR/AAC, the award provides support to two students to attend the society's annual meeting, "[i]n an effort to encourage an awareness of and interest in the archival field by minority students."⁶ In 1999, the award was renamed in honor of Harold T. Pinkett, the first African American archivist to work at the National Archives.

In 2003, SAA Council approved the creation of a Diversity Committee, "to ensure that the organization's services, activities, policies, communications, and products support the goal of a more diverse SAA and professional archival community."⁷ In 2005, SAA named diversity as one of its three strategic priorities and placed an emphasis on recruiting more minorities to the profession. In response, SAA established scholarships to attract and support minority students.

The Mosaic Scholarship was first awarded in 2009, providing tuition support to up to two minority graduate students in archival programs and registration to the society's annual meeting. With the sponsorship of the General Commission on Archives and History of the United Methodist Church, the Josephine Forman Scholarship was established in 2010 to provide

tuition support for a minority student enrolled in a graduate program in archival administration. With the creation of these scholarships, two of three scholarships currently offered by SAA are aimed at increasing diversity.

While providing financial support to minority students is important in recruiting new archivists, more needs to be done to ensure that these students remain engaged in the profession and rise to leadership positions within SAA and other archival associations. The initial recipients of the SAA Mosaic Scholarship in 2009–2010 lauded the potential of the Mosaic Scholarship program, but identified the development of a program to support networking, mentoring, and career and leadership development as an element that would support the retention of minority students.⁸

Amongst the tasks undertaken by the Diversity Committee is the development of the ARL/SAA Mosaic Program, which expands on the awards and scholarships available to minority students. In exploring the development of the Mosaic Program, SAA's Diversity Committee stated, "We believe that development of programs to attract and retain minority archivists is essential to the profession's and SAA's long-term viability."⁹ SAA and ARL were awarded the IMLS grant in support of the Mosaic Program in April of 2013. The program incorporates critical design elements similar to the American Library Association's (ALA) Spectrum Program, and ARL's Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce (IRDW) and Career Enhancement Program (CEP). Through the grant, the organizations seek to develop a comprehensive recruitment program incorporating tuition stipends in support of graduate archives education, paid internships, and financial support for students to attend the SAA Annual Meeting. The Mosaic Program would also include an annual symposium, in the same vein as the Spectrum Scholar Leadership Institute, or the ARL Leadership Symposium.¹⁰

In her presidential address, former SAA president Elizabeth Adkins said, "[Diversity has] also been a somewhat uncomfortable topic for SAA leadership over the years, because while it's easy to embrace the value of diversity, it's difficult to change the demographic makeup of a profession. But I believe it's essential for our future success."¹¹ Indeed, attracting and welcoming minorities into the profession will only work to improve the quality of the pool of archivists entering the profession. And although this article has focused on diversity amongst archivists, a diverse profession will strengthen efforts to ensure a diverse archival record. As former SAA president Rand Jimerson put



it, "A diverse and representative archival record can only be sustained over time by a diverse profession of archivists."¹² Through the establishment of records retention schedules and the acquisition, appraisal, and preservation of records, archivists help to determine what makes it into the archival record. Through archival arrangement and description, reference, instruction, and outreach, archivists raise awareness of the archives and influence the interpretation of the archival record. As archives play a vital role in preserving America's history, diversifying the profession is indeed an essential goal.

In December of 2014, the inaugural class of ARL/SAA Mosaic Program fellows was announced. A group of five students pursuing master's degrees in archival science is currently participating in paid internships at partner institutions, being supported for their graduate work, and convened at a leadership development event held in conjunction with the SAA Annual Meeting on August 12, 2014, in Washington, DC. Mosaic Program fellows also participate in a mentoring program, being paired with professional archivists from the internship host institutions. The participants were also given the opportunity to attend the 2014 ARL Leadership Symposium last January where they met the participants in ARL's other diversity recruitment programs. The outputs for this IMLS-funded project will be closely monitored, but the long-range effect of this program on the archives profession will need to be tracked over time. It is key that retention strategies are also developed and measured in order to ensure that the archives profession becomes more diverse and inclusive in the coming years.

For more information about the ARL/SAA Mosaic Program, and for photos and biographies of current participants, visit the ARL website:

<http://www.arl.org/mosaic>

Applications for awards are due on February 28 of every year. Visit SAA's Fellows, Awards, and Scholarships page for more information:

<http://www2.archivists.org/recognition>

Endnotes

1. Although diversity is multi-faceted, the focus of this article is on racial and ethnic diversity in the archival profession as well as diversity within the profession, rather than on diversity in the archival record.
2. Victoria Irons Walch, "Part 3: A Closer Look," *American Archivist* 69, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2006): 342.
3. Brenda Banks, "Part 6: A*Census: Report on Diversity," *American Archivist* 69, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2006): 484.
4. The Hispanic population, which is counted separately from the racial groups, was estimated at 14% of the population.
5. Ibid.
6. Beverly A. Cook and Karen L. Jeferson, "Three Awards for Minority Students," *African-American and Third World Archivists Newsletter* 8, no. 1 (March 1994): 5.
7. SAA Council, *Council Minutes* (Los Angeles: Society of American Archivists, August 19 and 23, 2003), <http://www.archivists.org/governance/minutes/min081903.asp>.
8. Janet Ceja and Harrison Inefuku, "2009-2010 Mosaic Scholars' Reports" (Washington, DC: Society of American Archivists, August 9, 2010), <http://www.archivists.org/council/Council0810/0810-1-IV-L-MosaicScholars.pdf>.
9. Diversity Committee, Society of American Archivists, Action: Mosaic Program Work Plan (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, January 27-30, 2011), <http://www.archivists.org/council/Council0111/0111-III-D-MosaicPlan.pdf>.
10. Nancy Beaumont, *Mosaic Program: SAA/ARL Collaboration* (San Diego: Society of American Archivists, August 6, 2012), <http://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/0812-1-V-J-MosaicProgram.pdf>.
11. Elizabeth W. Adkins, "Our Journey Toward Diversity—and a Call to (More) Action," *American Archivist* 71 (Spring/Summer 2008): 22.
12. Randall C. Jimerson, *Archives Power: A Call to Justice* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2009): 306.